

Schenck House
Formerly in Canarsie Park
Foot of Renssen Avenue, Brooklyn
Kings County, New York

HABS No. NY-513

HABS
N.Y.,
24- BROOK,
18-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

District No. NY-5

HABS
N.Y.,
24-BROOK,
18-

"THE SCHENCK HOUSE"

Brooklyn, Kings County, New York

Owner or Custodian

Building demolished. Parts now in the Brooklyn Museum of
Fine Arts.

Date of Erection

About the year 1670.

Architect

Unknown.

Builder

Roeloff Martene Schenck.

Present Condition

Restored in part in the Brooklyn Museum of Fine Arts.
The present drawings from measurements made by the District
Officer before demolition.

Number of Stories

One and one half.

Materials of Construction

Stone foundation, wood floors, wood interior and exterior walls,
shingle roof and siding. House remodeled in 1760, but no records
are available.

Other Existing Records

None.

Additional Data

Early History.

This house which was originally located in Canarsie Park, near the

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(Cont'd.) Jamaica Bay, surely is of thoroughly early Dutch type. This style is said to be perhaps one of the most indigenous of all American domestic architectural developments. The Schenck house was probably erected about ten years subsequent to the building of the Wyckoff House (H.A.B.S. Survey No. NY4-28 5902 Canarsie Lane, Brooklyn). It is fairly certain that the materials used in building the Wyckoff House were imported from Holland.

For years this Schenck house presented a study of interest even in its ruined condition through its plain yet graceful form of outline. The sloped gambrel roof, the fors and aft overhang, the sturdy construction, the wide hand split shingle siding, the outside masonry fireplace backs, the sash arrangement and the main doors are well worth careful study. One wonders why the two main windows north of the main front door are larger and more elaborate than the two south.

The addition originally at the east end of the main portion was lost long before 1930. Its form and detail were evident on the main portion left standing, and from footings and old prints. This lead the District Officer to permit the drawing of this old addition on the north and south elevations with pertinent notes.

The plan is simple and direct with center hall. The interior exhibited many bare structural members as well as some very fine interior trim. Much of the latter was probably added during altera-

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(Cont'd.) tions about 1760. Attention is called to the stairs, the hall closet and especially to the Dutch bed alcove in Bedroom No. 1. This is unique and rather rare.

The house was unoccupied for a long time gradually sinking into total ruin. In 1930 it was measured by this District Officer for the Brooklyn Museum and later was demolished. Parts are now reconstructed in reverse plan in the Brooklyn Museum of Arts and Sciences. Certainly the results of the H.A.B.S. Survey and the restorations in the Museum will permit this fine old bit of evidence left by the sturdy Dutch settlers of this district to be very definite.

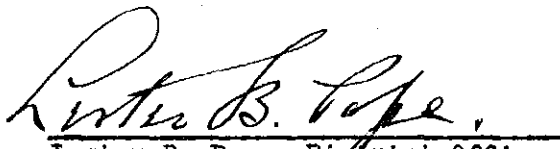
References

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"Historical Guide to the City of New York", Frank B. Kelly.


Nixon E. Paulk, Historian,
Historic American Buildings Survey.

Approved


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Reviewed Aug. 5, 1956 - T.W.